What Do Today's Leading Executives Say Are
The Barriers to Team Success?

When fifty C-Level Executives were asked the question, "What are the barriers to team success?" they responded with dozens of answers which can be separated into four categories: Behavior, Procedures, Direction and Resources/External Support.

Behavior[1]
Problems in human behavior and attitudes of all kinds can definitely block a team's ability to perform, say the executives. In the individual behavior area of "Ego and Pride" answers included "Hubris," "One dominant driver who doesn't listen to anyone else," and "the approach of "My way or the highway." Additionally, passive-aggressive types of behaviors were mentioned, including "Grudges," "Lack of effective participation," "Unexpressed agendas," and "Resistance to change."

Group behavior that can limit performance include "Personal conflicts," "Poor communication," "Lack of expressed concerns" and "Disrespect to others' personalities." Team leadership – or lack of it – can prevent team success, including "Poor leadership" and "Power struggle."

Additional behaviors that keeps groups from working as a cohesive team include "Closed minds," Fear/Fear of failure," "Not listening," "Lack of integrity," "Lack of creativity/rigid thinking," "Lack of integrity," and "Insincerity/dishonesty."

Procedures[2]
Many of the responses could be categorized as ineffective or undefined procedures for working together as a team, including "Poor definition of measurements," "Lack of ground rules" and "Prioritization." Other barriers to team success mentioned by the executives, such as "Different ideas that aren't flushed out," "Not talking about how to work together," "Lack of commitment," "Skill sets don't match task at hand" and "Accountability" could be solved or prevented by having a procedure to address the issue.

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[1] Dysfunctional team behavior is often caused by lack of awareness and inability to appreciate differences. The DrawSuccess Program addresses and resolves behavior issues so the team can resolve conflict and build unity.

[2] In addition to being a procedure for optimizing team performance, the DrawSuccess Program addresses not only the optimal way to establish team procedures but also address efficiency and accomplishment, meeting effectiveness, decision-making and more.

Direction[3]

To be successful, teams require unified direction and motivation. Obstacles to focused performance include, "Lack of defined or shared (or communicated) goals," "Lack of big picture understanding," and "Not focused."

Of course if the "Objective ill founded" can result in lack of participation and commitment to direction "Competing priorities/conflicting goals," "Not all being on the same page" "Pet projects," "Limited /accountability" and "Lack of ownership of team solution: were all mentioned as being contributing factors in team failure.

Resources/External Support[4]

Senior Executives recognize that lack of resources or external support can prevent teams from reaching their potential. "Lack of support from the top" and "Management expectations" were mentioned as hindering a team's ability to achieve, as were "Lack of resources (time/people/money)" "Organization culture" and having a "Textual environment."

External management can also cause problems for teams with "Player changes on teams," "Too many activities on everyone's plate," and creating teams with "Too many chiefs and not enough Indians."

Finally, "Distance" was mentioned, relating to the challenges encountered with virtual teams. Inherent in this response is the realization that it's difficult for teams to deliver high-quality work both regular face-to-face time as well as making sure to incorporate exercises to build relationships and bonding in virtual teams.

Brownell Landrum is a nationally recognized speaker, author, and founder of the DrawSuccess Program, a patented process to accelerate results through the intelligence of teams. The DrawSuccess Program simultaneously integrates all three of the Critical Components in a proven 30/90 day program. For more information, contact Brownell: Brownell@DrawSuccess.com or visit www.DrawSuccess.com

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[3] Several criteria of the DrawSuccess Program address team direction including aligning Mission & Values, establishing individual and collective Goals & Objectives with Results Measurement and even Individual Alignment, making sure each member of our team consistently demonstrates their commitment to the team's success.

[4] Leadership is engaged throughout the implementation of the DrawSuccess Program, receiving reports following each event with ideas, solutions and actions to take to improve the company's performance at all levels. In addition, employees at all levels are able to have a voice in sharing opportunities for organizational success.